

Let's get vertical

As the excitement grows for the Tempe Center for the Arts (TCA), so does the building itself. In the coming months, viewers will witness the first visible structures as they begin rising from the ground on the southwest bank of Tempe Town Lake.

"It's difficult to imagine everything that is taking place," Deputy Community Services Director (Cultural Services) Jody Ulich said. "To date, all of the work has been below ground. Starting in September, the construction will become vertical and much more visible."

Most notable will be the walls to the fly tower, the area above the stage that holds all of the rigging, which will rise to 85-feet.

Also, rising above grade will be the circular perimeter walls on the TCA's west, south and east sides. Eventually, glass will cover the north side of the facility where

visitors can enjoy spectacular views of the Papago Mountains and Town Lake from the lobby, concession area and the Lakeside and Donor rooms.

Like air, a lot of the work to date can't be seen. But those close to the TCA know it's there. Over the summer, crews excavated the site, poured footings and installed utilities, including sewer, water and power lines. They completed the tie-in to the 108-inch storm drain that travels through the site and completed pouring concrete for the walls to the orchestra pit, setting the stage for construction of the orchestra lift.

As has been reported, cement, the powder that is mixed with water to make the paste that binds concrete, is in high demand internationally. Tempe's construction contractors are receiving limited amounts each week and have been careful about scheduling pours. To date, the TCA has not

been hindered by supply shortages, and patrons can rest assured that considerations are built into major construction projects, like the TCA, and the cement shortage shouldn't have major impacts on scheduling or costs.

Interested onlookers are invited to watch the footprint as it takes shape by logging onto the city's Sneaky Peek camera at www.tempe.gov/arts/tca/enter-sneakypeek.asp.



Early work on the TCA, such as pouring footings and installing utilities, has been underground.